

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 6-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Jin *et al* (U.S. Patent No. 7,112,974). By this Amendment, Applicants amend claim 6.

In the interview cited above, the Examiner agreed that the cited prior art, Jin *et al*, fails to teach the dual contact feature recited by claim 6. Claim 6 recites “the contact surface is formed substantially parallel to the surface of the electrode and comes into contact with the oxide film of the surface of the electrode to function as a stopper for the tip portions when the tip portions penetrate the oxide film to reach the electrode.” The contact surface contacts the oxide film of the electrode surface while the tip portions contact the electrode itself, underneath the oxide film, thus providing a dual contact feature not taught in the cited prior art. Claim 6 is therefore not anticipated by Jin *et al*.

Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner in view of the April 16, 2009 interview, and the rejection to these claims be withdrawn, placing claims 6-8 in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that the proposed amendment of claims 6 does not raise new issues or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner, since all of the elements and their relationships claimed were either earlier claimed or inherent in the claims as examined. Therefore, this Amendment should allow for immediate action by the Examiner.

Finally, Applicants submit that the entry of the amendment would place the application in better form for appeal, should the Examiner dispute the patentability of the pending claims.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants submit that the claimed invention, as amended, is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art references cited against this application. Applicants therefore request the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to Deposit Account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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